

REMARKS

In response to the above-noted Office Action, Claims 2 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 11 and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 3, 7, 10, 11 and 15 were objected to for depending from rejected base claims, but were deemed to recite allowable subject matter. Applicant has therefore amended independent claims 1 and 9 to include the limitations of claims 2 and 10, respectively, which have been canceled. Claims 3 and 11 have been amended to depend respectively from claims 1 and 9. Claims 7 and 15 have been amended to stand as independent claims, incorporating the limitations of the base claims and intervening claims from which they formerly depended. It is believed that this amendment should be entered, notwithstanding the final rejection in this case, because it puts all the claims in order for allowance without requiring that the Examiner perform any further search.

Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 12-14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Khansari et al. (U.S. Patent 6,466,131) in view of IEEE Standard 802.1D. While disagreeing with the grounds of rejection, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 9, as noted above, for the sake of expediting issuance of a patent on the subject matter that the Examiner found to be patentable. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute claims on the broader subject matter of the original claims in a continuation of this application. In view of this amendment, claims 1 and 9 are believed to be patentable, as are claims 3-6 and 8, which depend from claim 1, and claims 11-14 and 16, which depend from claim 9.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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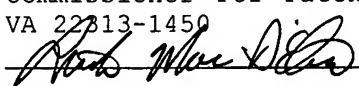
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